# TOC Baudrillard K

**Fiat is illusory, at the end of the round the aff doesn’t happen because it never will in the country of the 2nd amendment, however they have done a good job at mirroring the political stasis that halts the notion of real change that makes fiat practical. The aff’s invocation of moral rhetoric to justify a handgun ban creates an us/them dichotomy—they’ve created a moral boundary between themselves and their opposition**

**Klemash in 13**

Andrew Klemash (American University). “Morality in Political Rhetoric: Examining the Effects of Moral Language in Debate Using the Contemporary Gun Control Controversy.” Honors Capstone. May 7th, 2013. [http://aladinrc.wrlc.org/bitstream/handle/1961/15042/Klemash,%20Andrew%20-%20Spring%202013.pdf?sequence=1](http://aladinrc.wrlc.org/bitstream/handle/1961/15042/Klemash%2C%20Andrew%20-%20Spring%202013.pdf?sequence=1)

Using Moral Rhetoric in Political Debate Heated partisan language is not a new phenomenon in Washington. Yet, in the wake of a tragedy like the fatal mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, CT, one might expect the deadlock between sides to subside—if even slightly. However, with the renewed focus on gun control issues in politics, neither the proponents for nor the opponents to more gun control seem willing to budge, and in fact seem to be behaving more stubbornly than ever. A massacre of so many young children at the hands of a heavily armed gunman rallied the sympathies of the nation, but neither side was moved to alter their core position. This deadlock suggests that despite the issue is at hand, the political rhetoric regarding gun control unlikely to change no matter what tragedy occurs. Indeed, on both sides of the debate, the moral language used indicates that moderates and extremists are even more entrenched in their views than ever. The Sandy Hook massacre committed by a young shooter, Adam Lanza, was the latest of a recent spate of prolific tragedies involving gun violence. Due to the unique nature of the tragedy involving such young victims, the gun control debate was powerfully thrust to the forefront of the mind of every political pundit, columnist, blogger, and the general public. Suddenly everyone was rushing to make their political views on the issue known, and in the rush to do so the political rhetoric became flooded by calls to action and of a moral obligation for action. On one side stand those who are lobbying for more gun control: citizens, government officials, celebrities, interest groups, and organizations, whereas on the other side stand those lobbying against more gun control also including citizens, government officials, celebrities, interest groups, and organizations. Both sides were invited to be part of a month-long Vice Presidential commission in the wake of the tragedy, and both sides have the general population’s support. What separates one from the other are their views on what must be done. The question as to whether or not there needs to be more gun control is no doubt significant, yet one of the most interesting aspects of the contemporary debate is the use of moral rhetoric by both sides to support their own views as well as how they employ this language **to demoralize the position of their opponents**. Starting with the press conference where the results of the month-long commission were announced, the gun control debate has been shrouded in the political rhetoric of morality. There the Vice President said America has a **“moral obligation” to act**, and President Obama followed by saying that Congress and the government had a responsibility to prevent “evil” acts and furthermore that Americans have an “obligation” to do so in any way possible. While this instance was neither the first nor the most incendiary use of morality in the current gun control debate, the prolific nature of the press conference and the stature of the two men make the language that they did use very weighty. Moreover, invoking morality essentially means that a distinction is being drawn between what is good and what is bad or evil. In other words, **moral language serves as a dichotomous political tool for separating the morally “right” camp from the morally “wrong” camp in this debate.** Here, the pro-gun control camp argues that they have the moral support of the nation, and this claim is reinforced by their belief that their position is morally superior, while the anti-gun control camp had been thrown on the defensive from the beginning of the debate. Additionally, having been labeled as “bad” morally those opposing additional gun legislation have had to contend with being equated with other groups such as terrorists, criminals, or sexual deviants. The rhetoric regarding gun control has led to comparisons of both sides to Hitler’s Nazi Germany, which is logically absurd, for a critically thinking viewer of this exchange of rhetoric would conclude quite rationally that both sides cannot be acting like the Nazis. For example, prominent politician Mike Huckabee has made the comparison between gun control supporters and ultimate disarmament of the populace, which he claims was a key point of how the Nazi regime was able to come to power.3 In response, articles have been published by proponents of gun control stating that not only is the comparison unfair to them but also that perhaps the opponents of gun control are the ones with views most in line with Hitler’s Nazi Germany, with one article plainly stating “Hitler and pro-gun advocates want the same thing” referring to deregulation policies.4 In the context of this back-and-forth, the rhetoric is becoming increasingly heated, with a popular conservative website stating not only that “Hitler disarmed his domestic enemies before launching a genocide against them” but also that “left-wing blogs have successfully gamed Google’s search engine results so that when people searched for terms such as ‘Nazi gun control’, they were met with a plethora of articles claiming the historical bias for this connection was a fabrication.”5 The absurdity of the fact that both sides seem to be trying to compare the goals of the other to arguably the most evil regime in history is evidence of just how far people will go in their use of moral rhetoric to both demonize the other side and galvanize their own side against the opposition. Although most moral language in political rhetoric is not nearly as extreme as the above, it is significant to recall that while historically recognized as a driving force behind law and used as means to legitimize it, moral language itself rarely finds its way into the text of specific laws. However, the language of rights implies morality, and particularly in America, where rights are enshrined in the Constitution as the highest law of the land, and thus public moral support for the law as a “good” social structure is evidenced simply by observing the legal, executive, and justice systems. To call or imply that an argument is immoral is to imply that the argument is not right, not a right, and not lawful. In the press conference following Sandy Hook, both the President and Vice President used language of morals to describe the future action they desire, thereby **creating a moral boundary between their ideas and any opposition.** In addition to their moral language, the use of the word “obligation” is an **extraordinarily strong language** selection, for its use implies that anyone who does not feel they are obligated to act in such a way are not moral (or at least do not have the same morals as the speaker), **which creates a “us” and “them” mentality in listeners.**

**The images of suffering they present are like a drug, used by the media and politicians to advance their ends. They present these images to you in exchange for the ballot for their own moralistic satisfaction, but this constant search for new catastrophes to “solve” can only end in domination and violence.**

**Baudrillard in 94**

Jean Baudrillard (philosopher of symbolic swag), “The Illusion of the End” p. 66-71. 1994.

**We have long denounced the** capitalistic, economic **exploitation of** the **poverty** of the 'other half of the world' [['autre monde]. **We must today denounce the moral and sentimental exploitation of that poverty - charity cannibalism being worse than oppressive violence.** The extraction and humanitarian reprocessing of a destitution which has become the equivalent of oil deposits and gold mines. The extortion of the spectacle of poverty and, at the same time, of our charitable condescension: a worldwide appreciated surplus of fine sentiments and bad conscience. We should, in fact, see this not as the extraction of raw materials, but as a waste-reprocessing enterprise. Their destitution and our bad conscience are, in effect, all part of the waste-products of history- the main thing is to recycle them to produce a new energy source. We have here an escalation in the psychological balance of terror. World capitalist oppression is now merely the vehicle and alibi for this other, much more ferocious, form of moral predation. One might almost say, contrary to the Marxist analysis, **that material exploitation is only there to extract that spiritual raw material that is the misery of peoples, which serves as psychological nourishment for the rich countries and media nourishment for our daily lives.** The 'Fourth World' (we are no longer dealing with a 'developing' Third World) is once again beleaguered, this time as a catastrophe-bearing stratum. The West is whitewashed in the reprocessing of the rest of the world as waste and residue. And the white world repents and seeks absolution - it, too, the waste-product of its own history. The South is a natural producer of raw materials, the latest of which is catastrophe. The North, for its part, specializes in the reprocessing of raw materials and hence also in the reprocessing of catastrophe. Bloodsucking protection, humanitarian interference, Medecins sans frontieres, international solidarity, etc. The last phase of colonialism: the New Sentimental Order is merely the latest form of the New World Order. **Other people's destitution becomes our adventure playground**. Thus, the humanitarian offensive aimed at the Kurds - a show of repentance on the part of the Western powers after allowing Saddam Hussein to crush them - is in reality merely the second phase of the war, a phase in which charitable intervention finishes off the work of extermination. We are the consumers of the ever delightful spectacle of poverty and catastrophe, and of the moving spectacle of **our own efforts to alleviate it** (which, in fact, **merely function to secure the conditions of reproduction of the catastrophe market**); there, at least, in the order of moral profits, the Marxist analysis is wholly applicable: we see to it that extreme poverty is reproduced as a symbolic deposit, as a fuel essential to the moral and sentimental equilibrium of the West. In our defence, it might be said that this extreme poverty was largely of our own making and it is therefore normal that we should profit by it. There can be no finer proof that the distress of the rest of the world is at the root of Western power and that the spectacle of that distress is its crowning glory than the inauguration, on the roof of the Arche de la Defense, with a sumptuous buffet laid on by the Fondation des Droits de l'homme, of an exhibition of the finest photos of world poverty. Should we be surprised that spaces are set aside in the Arche d' Alliance. for universal suffering hallowed by caviar and champagne? Just as the economic crisis of the West will not be complete so long as it can still exploit the resources of the rest of the world, so the symbolic crisis will be complete only when it is no longer able to feed on the other half's human and natural catastrophes (Eastern Europe, the Gulf, the Kurds, Bangladesh, etc.). We need this drug, which serves us as an aphrodisiac and hallucinogen. And the poor countries are the best suppliers - as, indeed, they are of other drugs. We provide them, through our media, with the means to exploit this paradoxical resource, just as we give them the means to exhaust their natural resources with our technologies. Our whole culture lives off this catastrophic cannibalism, relayed in cynical mode by the news media, and carried forward in moral mode by our humanitarian aid, which is a way of encouraging it and ensuring its continuity, just as economic aid is a strategy for perpetuating under-development. Up to now, the financial sacrifice has been compensated a hundredfold by the moral gain. **But when the catastrophe market itself reaches crisis point**, in accordance with the implacable logic of the market, when distress becomes scarce or the marginal returns on it fall from overexploitation, **when we run out of disasters from elsewhere or when they can no longer be traded like coffee or other commodities, the West will be forced to produce its own catastrophe for itself, in order to meet its need for spectacle and that voracious appetite for symbols which characterizes it even more than its voracious appetite for food.** It will reach the point where it devours itself. When we have finished sucking out the destiny of others, we shall have to invent one for ourselves. The Great Crash, the symbolic crash, will come in the end from us Westerners, but only when we are no longer able to feed on the hallucinogenic misery which comes to us from the other half of the world. Yet they do not seem keen to give up their monopoly. The Middle East, Bangladesh, black Africa and Latin America are really going flat out in the distress and catastrophe stakes, and thus in providing symbolic nourishment for the rich world. They might be said to be overdoing it: heaping earthquakes, floods, famines and ecological disasters one upon another, and finding the means to massacre each other most of the time. The 'disaster show' goes on without any let-up and our sacrificial debt to them far exceeds their economic debt. The misery with which they generously overwhelm us is something we shall never be able to repay. The sacrifices we offer in return are laughable (a tornado or two, a few tiny holocausts on the roads, the odd financial sacrifice) and, moreover, by some infernal logic, these work out as much greater gains for us, whereas our kindnesses have merely added to the natural catastrophes another one immeasurably worse: the demographic catastrophe, a veritable epidemic which we deplore each day in pictures. In short, there is such distortion between North and South, to the symbolic advantage of the South (a hundred thousand Iraqi dead against casualties numbered in tens on our side: in every case we are the losers), that one day everything will break down. One day, the West will break down if we are not soon washed clean of this shame, if an international congress of the poor countries does not very quickly decide to share out this symbolic privilege of misery and catastrophe. It is of course normal, since we refuse to allow the spread of nuclear weapons, that they should refuse to allow the spread of the catastrophe weapon. But it is not right that they should exert that monopoly indefinitely. In any case, the underdeveloped are only so by comparison with the Western system and its presumed success. In the light of its assumed failure, they are not under-developed at all. They are only so in terms of a dominant evolutionism which has always been the worst of colonial ideologies. The argument here is that there is a line of objective progress and everyone is supposed to pass through its various stages (we find the same eyewash with regard to the evolution of species and in that evolutionism which unilaterally sanctions the superiority of the human race). In the light of current upheavals, which put an end to any idea of history as a linear process, there are no longer either developed or under-developed peoples. Thus, to encourage hope of evolution - albeit by revolution - among the poor and to doom them, in keeping with the objective illusion of progress, to technological salvation is a criminal absurdity. In actual fact, it is their good fortune to be able to escape from evolution just at the point when we no longer know where it is leading. In any case, a majority of these peoples, including those of Eastern Europe, do not seem keen to enter this evolutionist modernity, and their weight in the balance is certainly no small factor in the West's repudiation of its own history, of its own utopias and its own modernity. It might be said that the routes of violence, historical or otherwise, are being turned around and that the viruses now pass from South to North, there being every chance that, five hundred years after America was conquered, 1992 and the end of the century will mark the comeback of the defeated and the sudden reversal of that modernity. The sense of pride is no longer on the side of wealth but of poverty, of those who - fortunately for them - have nothing to repent, and may indeed glory in being privileged in terms of catastrophes. Admittedly, this is a privilege they could hardly renounce, even if they wished to, but natural disasters merely reinforce the sense of guilt felt towards them by the wealthy – by those whom God visibly scorns since he no longer even strikes them down. One day it will be the Whites themselves who will give up their whiteness. It is a good bet that repentance will reach its highest pitch with the five-hundredth anniversary of the conquest of the Americas. We are going to have to lift the curse of the defeated - but symbolically victorious - peoples, which is insinuating itself five hundred years later, by way of repentance, into the heart of the white race. No solution has been found to the dramatic situation of the under-developed, and none will be found since their drama has now been overtaken by that of the overdeveloped, of the rich nations. The psychodrama of congestion, saturation, super abundance, neurosis and the breaking of blood vessels which haunts us - the drama of the excess of means over ends – calls more urgently for attention than that of penury, lack and poverty. That is where the most imminent danger of catastrophe resides, in the societies which have run out of emptiness. **Artificial catastrophes,** like the beneficial aspects of civilization, **progress much more quickly than natural ones**. The underdeveloped are still at the primary stage of the natural, unforeseeable catastrophe. We are already at the second stage, that of the manufactured catastrophe - imminent and foreseeable - and **we shall soon be at that of the pre-programmed catastrophe,** the catastrophe of the third kind, **deliberate and experimental.** And, **paradoxically, it is our pursuit of the means for averting natural catastrophe** - the unpredictable form of destiny - **which will take us there.** Because it is unable to escape it, humanity will pretend to be the author of its destiny. **Because it cannot accept being confronted with an end which is uncertain or governed by fate, it will prefer to stage its own death as a species.**

**Marking handguns as evil mirrors the way we have marked drugs as evil. These associations do not actually help solve evil instead politics uses them to eschew human responsibility for evil and pave over deeper social antagonisms. This creates a hyperreal where actors compete for who gets to revise history at the expense of the truth.**

**Katovich and Wieting in 2000:**

Michael Katovich and Stephen Wieting, “Evil as Indexical: The Implicit Objective Status of Guns and Illegal Drugs” Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction. Vol 23, No 2. 2000. Pg. 161-182.

**In part, guns and drugs come to be viewed as different types of profane objects** (see Durkheim [1915] 1960). Ongoing responses to guns as honored objects differ from responses to particular drugs as threats to a legitimate marketplace. While people did honor some vilified drugs at one time, this practice was never confirmed on a regular basis (see Stivers 1982). Colonists regarded the hemp from marijuana as sacred, but little evidence of this exists in the here-and-now to make this orientation part of an implied objective past. Relegating these drugs to a potentially evil status has more credence, in terms of the past, than relegating objects such as guns to this status. The view that guns are a necessity has become so grounded in a past that few would consider making them the equivalent of evil drugs. We speculate that a drug-evil connection addresses a more resonant conception of an implied objective past than offered by those advocating a gun-evil connection. The idea that drugs are evil and cause evil tends to be more firmly grounded and continuous in our experiences than the idea that drugs provide pleasure to those who have the right to treat substances as property. **However, with increasing attention to the dangers of guns and with the generation of indexical expressions that associate dangers with implied objective pasts, guns may become equally “useful” correlates with evil as are drugs. At least in reference to our earlier definition of evil, allowing for the unimpeded possession of guns and for their use may become an unacceptable vocabulary of motive as incidences of gun-related violence become more noticeable**. When defining evil, observers link objects, acts, or actors to perceived patterns of harm and future hypotheses concerning potential harm. Success in attaching a designation of evil to guns or drugs becomes more likely when noticeable and provocative consequences can be correlated with such attachments. **Our conception of evil is tied intimately to the way that an object in and of itself becomes viewed as a danger to human rights and our expectations of what constitutes a good life.** A syringe full of heroin implies both a past destruction and a foreboding threat to future users. **The “evil” objects themselves seem to cause future events, independent of human agency** (see Reese and Katovich 1989). Heroin epidemics will cause future suicides. Addictive drugs will cause pathological interactions. **On the other hand, objects seen as potentially contributing to a social good become defined as meaningful only in conjunction with human agency**. Guns can bring about destruction, but only when put “in the wrong hands.” Otherwise, they contribute to justice, security, and protection of private property. **Defining objects as evil involves a web of cultural ideologies and contradictions. Guns and drugs are not merely social objects but represent cultural events that have their roots in conventional and deviant practices.** Such practices become redesignated as people and technological innovations change our social contexts. Demonstrating the efficacy and morality of one event and the immorality of another will always be less than straightforward and clear. On this provocative stage, those advocating and opposing the uses of drugs and the bearing of arms construct and deconstruct social pasts to either locate events as continuous or dis locate them as sporadic flukes that have no reasonable resonance with our ongoing present.

**The alternative is the radical nihilistic challenge of my speech act. Our blind adherence to fiat and poor political representation as a community has drained debate of meaning. There is no connection between what we do here and the political, only the refusal to participate in the fiat game can bring us closer to meaning.**

**Baudrillard in 81:**

Jean Baudrillard, “Simulacra and Simulation.” Published 1984, in English in 1994.

**I am a nihilist.** I observe, I accept, I assume the immense process of the destruction of appearances (and of the seduction of appearances) in the service of meaning (representation, history, criticism, etc.) that is the fundamental fact of the nineteenth century. The true revolution of the nineteenth century, of modernity, is the radical destruction of appearances, the disenchantment of the world and its abandonment to the violence of interpretation and of history.

I observe, I accept, I assume, I analyze **the second revolution**, that of the twentieth century, **that of postmodernity, which is the immense process of the destruction of meaning**, equal to the earlier destruction of appearances. **[Those] who strikes with meaning [are] killed by meaning.** The dialectic stage, the critical stage is empty. There is no more stage. There is no therapy of meaning or therapy through meaning: therapy itself is part of the generalized process of indifferentiation. The stage of analysis itself has become uncertain, aleatory: theories float (in fact, nihilism is impossible, because it is still a desperate but determined theory, an imaginary of the end, a weltanschauung of catastrophe).\*1 **Analysis is itself perhaps the decisive element of the immense process of the freezing over of meaning**. The surplus of meaning that theories bring, their competition at the level of meaning is completely secondary in relation to their coalition in the glacial and four-tiered operation of dissection and transparency. One must be conscious that, no matter how the analysis proceeds, it proceeds toward the freezing over of meaning, it assists in the precession of simulacra and of indifferent forms. The desert grows. Implosion of meaning in the media. Implosion of the social in the masses. Infinite growth of the masses as a function of the acceleration of the system. Energetic impasse. Point of inertia. A destiny of inertia for a saturated world. The phenomena of inertia are accelerating (if one can say that). The arrested forms proliferate, and growth is immobilized in excrescence. Such is also the secret of the hypertelie, of what goes further than its own end. It would be our own mode of destroying finalities: going further, too far in the same direction - destruction of meaning through simulation, hypersimulation, hypertelie. Denying its own end through hyperfinality (the crustacean, the statues of Easter Island) - is this not also the obscene secret of cancer? Revenge of excrescence on growth, revenge of speed on inertia. **The masses themselves are caught up in a gigantic process of inertia through acceleration. They are this excrescent, devouring, process that annihilates all growth and all surplus meaning.** They are this circuit short-circuited by a monstrous finality. It is this point of inertia and what happens outside this point of inertia that today is fascinating, enthralling (gone, therefore, the discreet charm of the dialectic). If it is nihilistic to privilege this point of inertia and the analysis of this irreversibility of systems up to the point of no return, then I am a nihilist. **If it is nihilistic to be obsessed by the mode of disappearance, and no longer by the mode of production, then I am a nihilist.** Disappearance, aphanisis, implosion, Fury of Verschwindens. Transpolitics is the elective sphere of the mode of disappearance (of the real, of meaning, of the stage, of history, of the social, of the individual). To tell the truth, it is no longer so much a question of nihilism: in disappearance, in the desertlike, aleatory, and indifferent form, there is no longer even pathos, the pathetic of nihilism - that mythical energy that is still the force of nihilism, of radicality, mythic denial, dramatic anticipation. It is no longer even disenchantment, with the seductive and nostalgic, itself enchanted, tonality of disenchantment. It is simply disappearance.

The trace of this radicality of the mode of disappearance is already found in Adorno and Benjamin, parallel to a nostalgic exercise of the dialectic. Because there is a nostalgia of the dialectic, and without a doubt the most subtle dialectic is nostalgic to begin with. But more deeply, there is in Benjamin and Adorno another tonality, that of a melancholy attached to the system itself, one that is incurable and beyond any dialectic. **It is this melancholia of systems that today takes the upper hand through the ironically transparent forms that surround us.** It is this melancholia that is becoming our fundamental passion.

It is no longer the spleen or the vague yearnings of the fin-de-siecle soul. It is no longer nihilism either, which in some sense aims at normalizing everything through destruction, the passion of resentment (ressentiment).\*2 No, melancholia is the fundamental tonality of functional systems, of current systems of simulation, of programming and information. Melancholia is the inherent quality of the mode of the disappearance of meaning, of the mode of the volatilization of meaning in operational systems. And we are all melancholic. Melancholia is the brutal disaffection that characterizes our saturated systems. **Once the hope of balancing good and evil, true and false, indeed of confronting some values of the same order, once the more general hope of a relation of forces and a stake has vanished. Everywhere, always, the system is too strong: hegemonic.** Against this hegemony of the system, one can exalt the ruses of desire, practice revolutionary micrology of the quotidian, exalt the molecular drift or even defend cooking. This does not resolve the imperious necessity of checking the system in broad daylight. This, only terrorism can do. **It is the trait of reversion that effaces the remainder, just as a single ironic smile effaces a whole discourse**, just as a single flash of denial in a slave effaces all the power and pleasure of the master. **The more hegemonic the system, the more the imagination is struck by the smallest of its reversals. The challenge, even infinitesimal, is the image of a chain failure. Only this reversibility without a counterpart is an event today, on the nihilistic and disaffected stage of the political. Only it mobilizes the imaginary.**

If being a nihilist, is carrying, to the unbearable limit of hegemonic systems, this radical trait of derision and of violence, this challenge that the system is summoned to answer through its own death, then I am a terrorist and nihilist in theory as the others are with their weapons. Theoretical violence, not truth, is the only resource left us. But such a sentiment is Utopian. Because it would be beautiful to be a nihilist, if there were still a radicality - as it would be nice to be a terrorist, if death, including that of the terrorist, still had meaning. But it is at this point that things become insoluble. Because to this active nihilism of radicality, the system opposes its own, the nihilism of neutralization. The system is itself also nihilistic, in the sense that it has the power to pour everything, including what denies it, into indifference. In this system, death itself shines by virtue of its absence. (The Bologna train station, the Oktoberfest in Munich: the dead are annulled by indifference, that is where terrorism is the involuntary accomplice of the whole system, not politically, but in the accelerated form of indifference that it contributes to imposing.) Death no longer has a stage, neither phantasmatic nor political, on which to represent itself, to play itself out, either a ceremonial or a violent one. And this is the victory of the other nihilism, of the other terrorism, that of the system. There is no longer a stage, not even the minimal illusion that makes events capable of adopting the force of reality-no more stage either of mental or political solidarity: what do Chile, Biafra, the boat people, Bologna, or Poland matter? All of that comes to be annihilated on the television screen. **We are in the era of events without consequences** (and of theories without consequences). There is no more hope for meaning. And without a doubt this is a good thing: meaning is mortal. But that on which it has imposed its ephemeral reign, what it hoped to liquidate in order to impose the reign of the Enlightenment, that is, appearances, they, are immortal, invulnerable to the nihilism of meaning or of non-meaning itself. This is where seduction begins.

# Overviews

**It is my last national circuit tournament and I refuse to play the fiat game.** The aff’s moralistic discourse on guns creates an us/them dichotomy—that causes irrational debates which present real suffering as weapons to win political capital or in this case, a ballot – that’s Klemash and Baudrillard. In the process we mark objects as evil through selective histories which distracts us from the social issues that create suffering which turns case – that’s Katovich and Wieting. The aff models gridlocked politics devoid of meaning and then expects us to fiat the aff. This is unhealthy and stops us from understanding why the aff wouldn’t happen in the real world, the alternative is my act is radical nihilism – a rejection of the terms of the question altogether – that’s Baudrillard. To vote for the critique is to recognize the lack of practical knowledge in our practices and to stand in solidarity against this hegemonic system of norms.

# 2NR Blocks

### AT: Where’s your role of the ballot?

**The ballot has no role and that’s okay, the idea that the ballot is this revolutionary symbol is a simulation. They encourage us to discuss certain issues, but the discussion never happens. We argue over the ballot’s infinite meaning constantly and in the process drain it of any meaning.**

**This proves the alt – a role of the ballot states that we should only discuss what we should be discussing, which creates a vacuum.**

**Voting for the critique is an act of political solidarity, the alt argues that acts of reversal against hegemonic systems like the critique are violently reacted to – to vote for the critique is to delegitimize the hegemony of meaningless debate and an engagement with the possibility of meaningful debate.**

### AT: Perm

**The perm is incoherent, and all the links are DAs –**

**1. My Klemash evidence is specific to gun control and the rhetoric surrounding it—be skeptical that the aff is compatible with the alt when they don’t even have a perm card**

**2. The AC itself invoked moral rhetoric to justify a handgun ban—that creates an us/them dichotomy which halts progress and commodifies the representations of suffering they use—that’s Klemash and Baudrillard**

**3. No perms on the method debate, that’s severance.**

**4. The alt is a question of a radically nihilistic speech act, the fact that the AC even toyed with the notion of fiat shows that the perm is only an attempt to coopt my fight for change which drains it off any meaning. The alt is a question of reversal, you cannot act within the system I critique and then be like, “lol jk” – that’s pulling a Hillary Clinton**

**Even if a handgun ban could theoretically occur with the alt, they should be held responsible for their rhetoric—otherwise the perm severs from their discourse**

**Severance makes a meaningful discussion impossible because they can shift away from clash—this is the same sort of stasis that the argument criticizes which just proves the alt.**

### AT: The Aff is Possible

**I don’t think so, look at the stats. Our images of suffering are growing but so is support for guns because one feeds the other. This is a doublebind, either the aff is a utopian reading of politics and halts real change OR they are calling for your ballot disingenuously. Arnett 15:**

George Arnett (data analyst and journalist for the Guardian), “Mass shootings have no effect on the public debate about gun ownership in US”. The Guardian. October 2, 2015. http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2015/oct/02/mass-shootings-have-no-impact-on-support-for-gun-rights-in-the-us

**Mass shootings occur almost once a day in the US, yet protecting gun rights seems to concern Americans more than increasing controls on guns.** On Thursday, a gunman killed nine people in a community college in Oregon. It was the 994th gun incident in which there were four or more victims (including the shooter) since the start of 2013, according to the website Mass Shooting Tracker. The data shows that excluding Thursday’s shootings, there have been 375 deaths and 1,089 injuries in 2015 so far. The website began to collect the figures on known incidents just after 20 children were gunned down in December 2012 at Sandy Hook elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut. Speaking from Washington after the killing spree, Barack Obama said: “We’ve become numb to this” – and he seems to be right. **December 2014 marked the first time in two decades of polling that those feeling strongly that the rights of Americans to own guns should be bolstered were in the majority, according to Pew Research. According to the survey, 52% said it was more important to protect Americans’ right to own guns, in contrast with 46% who said it was more important to control ownership of the weapons.** Those supporting gun control were in the majority immediately after the Newtown shootings, with 51% backing it in the US in January 2013. However, that share had dropped by five percentage points by the end of 2014. Between those two surveys, the proportion agreeing with the idea that gun ownership protects people from becoming victims of crime increased from 48% to 57%. According to another poll released earlier this year, while the vast majority of the public supports background checks most with an opinion are against stricter gun controls. **Part of this seems to be down to misperception. In a 2014 Gallup survey, 63% of Americans said they thought violent crime was increasing despite the rate hovering at near 20-year lows. The Pew data from December 2014 showed that 63% of those surveyed thought that keeping a gun in the home made them safer, compared with 35% 15 years before. In other words, Americans feel less safe and think a gun might be able to protect them.** Nearly 11m guns were manufactured in the US in 2013, with a total of just below 16m entering circulation after legal imports are included, according to the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The Small Arms Survey from 2011 suggested that the US had by far the highest rate of guns per capita in the world with 89 for every 100 residents. This is far above the 55 per 100 residents in Yemen and nearly twice the proportion of the third-most armed developed country in the world, Switzerland, which has 46 per 100 people in its population. This does not mean 89% of Americans own a gun [.](http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/06/04/a-minority-of-americans-own-guns-but-just-how-many-is-unclear/)According to a 2013 Pew survey, about 37% of households had one. However, the US has the highest murder rate after Mexico of any OECD country with about two-thirds of those deaths involving a firearm. **But no matter how many mass shootings there have been, it seems the argument** **that increasing controls on firearm ownership will make Americans safer is clearly not cutting it with the US public.**

### AT: Postmodernism is Bad

**They’re missing a link – how exactly am I postmodern? I say to reject their practices, but that doesn’t increase postmodernism in any way.**

**Second, that doesn’t refute any of the arguments we make. Even if postmodernism as a principle is bad, it doesn’t make the aff a good idea.**

**Third, their argument is irrelevant unless they claim my discourse has impacts outside of the round, which is a postmodern idea about the impact of discourse, so they’re equally postmodern if their argument has any impact, putting them in a double bind.**

**Fourth, Baudrillard doesn’t say postmodernism is good, he just presents a way to look at life in a postmodern world. Rejecting his views is like rejecting a path that helps guide us because we don’t like where we are now – their argument is more counter-productive than postmodernism itself could ever be.**

### AT: Fiat is Good

**The argument isn’t that fiat is bad, it’s that the way we use fiat has abstractified away from its theoretical benefits. Fiat only makes sense if the topic and the ways we discuss it have grounding in the real world and how change is created. Yelling about morality and extinction is not how change is created; in fact, it is halting any real progress on gun control right now – that’s Klemash.**

**Proving that fiat as a norm is good is not sufficient to disprove the critique, they need to show why their deployment of fiat is specifically good and has meaning beyond a won debate ballot.**

### AT: Morality Framing Good

**Justifying morality’s enforcement from the perspective of morality is self-undermining**

**Klemash 13**

Andrew Klemash (American University). “Morality in Political Rhetoric: Examining the Effects of Moral Language in Debate Using the Contemporary Gun Control Controversy.” Honors Capstone. May 7th, 2013. [http://aladinrc.wrlc.org/bitstream/handle/1961/15042/Klemash,%20Andrew%20-%20Spring%202013.pdf?sequence=1](http://aladinrc.wrlc.org/bitstream/handle/1961/15042/Klemash%2C%20Andrew%20-%20Spring%202013.pdf?sequence=1)

The place of morality in law is undisputed historically, as the very language of rights reveals, but the letter of most law is absent any language of rights or morality. Despite this absence, the political rhetoric that supports or opposes contentious law is almost always filled with moral rhetoric. One could speculate that this is because whoever invokes morality cheats, in the sense that once morality enters the debate, the debate has little chance of returning to the nuts and bolts level of the issue at hand on a logical or rational level and instead becomes a war where neither side can gain ground. Perhaps politicians realize the implications of morality in law, that when they use it they are aware that they are trapped into their position. If they do realize this, then **they undermine their morality by claiming moral superiority**. By attempting to justify morality from within that morality, they fail to provide adequate reason violating the no harm principle as applied to political discourse, **for they are invoking morality simply to create the dichotomy.** When morality is used in this way, its use can **undermine its own moral authority** even as it claims that moral authority because it is trying to enforce its validity rather than recognizing or even attempting to compromise.

### AT: Debate is a Game

**LOL well if we’re playing football I just got a concussion from the AC**

### AT: Reps Bad

**I’ll cede that having to defend all of the reps of the AC is a heavy burden but the resolution is an inherently political question, it is entirely reasonable that you should have to defend your political representations which is what I critique.**

### AT: Zanotti

**Good job misreading Zanotti, Zanotti says we need to focus on our context within power not our intent. The critique is an examination of debate’s context relative to fiat within power, the aff is a statement of political intent. This is their own evidence.** Zanotti 13

(Laura, Ph.D., Virginia Tech, “Governmentality, Ontology, Methodology: Re-thinking Political Agency in the Global World,” Alternatives: Global, Local, Political 201X, Vol XX(X) 1–17)

**Non-substantialist positions** do not assume the existence of monolithic power scripts or ontologically autonomous subjects; **do not establish linear links between intentions and outcomes, and do not assume that every form of agency needs an identifiable agent. Instead, they call for careful attention to contexts.** In this disposition, Bleiker advocates a modest conceptualization of agency, one that relies upon Michel de Certeau’s operational schemes, Judith Butler’s contingent foundations, or Gilles Deleuze’s rhizomes.78 In a similar vein, in a refreshing reading of realism, Brent Steele has highlighted **the problematic aspects of assessing political agency based upon actors’ intention and focused on contexts as the yardstick for assessing political actions.**79 For Steele, **‘‘as actors practice their agency within the space of a public sphere, intentionality—at best—becomes dynamic as new spaces in that sphere open up. Intentions, even if they are genuine, become largely irrelevant in such a dynamic, violent, and vibrant realm of human interaction.’’80 In shifting attention from ‘‘intention’’ to the context that made some actions possible**, **Steele sees agency as a ‘‘redescription’’ of existing conditions, rather than the total ‘‘**rejection’’ of or ‘‘opposition’’ **to a totalizing ‘‘script.’’ As a consequence, Steele advocates ‘‘pragmatist humility’’ for politicians and scholars as well**.81 In summary, in non-substantialist frameworks, agency is conceptualized as modest and multifarious agonic interactions, localized tactics, hybridized engagement and redescriptions, a series of uncertain and situated responses to ambiguous discourses and practices of power aimed at the construction of new openings, possibilities and different distributive processes, the outcomes of which are always to an extent unpredictable. **Political agency here is not** imagined as **a quest for individual authenticity in opposition to a unitary nefarious oppressive Leviathan aimed at the creation of a ‘‘better totality’’ where subjects can float freed of ‘‘oppression,’’ or a multitude made into a unified ‘‘subject’’ will reverse the might of Empire and bring about a condition of immanent social justice.** By not reifying power as a script and subject as monads endowed with freedom non-substantialist positions open the way for conceptualizing political agency as an engagement imbricated in praxis. The ethical virtue that is called for is ‘‘pragmatist humility,’’ that **is the patience of playing with the cards that are dealt to us, enacting redescriptions** and devising tactics for tinkering82 with what exists in specific contexts. Conclusion In this article, I have argued that, notwithstanding their critical stance, scholars who use governmentality as a descriptive tool remain rooted in substantialist ontologies that see power and subjects as standing in a relation of externality.

### AT: Kantian Monopoly on Force Affs

**The aff’s appeal to a “monopoly on force” gives you the impression of a peaceful public sphere, ignoring that this monopoly is how the state re-orders its own violence against dissidents—this violence necessarily serves to strengthen the hierarchies of modern capitalism**

**Kossler 3**

Reinhart Kossler (Visiting Professor, College of International Relations, Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, Japan, Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Münster, Germany). “The Modern Nation State and Regimes of Violence: Reflections on the Current Situation.” The International Studies Association of Ritsumeikan University: Ritsumeikan Annual Review of International Studies, 2003. <http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/acd/cg/ir/college/bulletin/e-vol.2/kossler.pdf>

Contradictions of the monopoly on violence and the need for societal control Even from this brief sketch, we can gauge an idea of what seems to lie at the basis of the great conceptual difficulties that exist in coming to terms with the modern nation state. This can be understood as a set of dialectical tensions which shape the system of the organisation of violence. These tensions evolve between poles that are identical with two central traits of the modern state: concentration of the exertion of violence and control of violence, both in the public field at home and in external relations. Yet, as has been indicated, the monopoly on violence, limited as it is to the public sphere, is not equivalent to an absence of violence, as particularly some readings of the process of ‘civilisation’ in the Eliasian version may suggest. This monopoly disregards systematically important realms of life which are defined as ‘private’ in modern capitalist societies, above all, the enterprise and the family, although state sponsored regulations have of course been introduced here, as it were ex post (cf. Kössler 1993). What is more, the modern state’s monopoly on violence is anything but the elimination of violence even in the public realm where it applies. What we are rather confronted with is a thoroughgoing re-organisation, a **re-ordering of (public) violence**. Thus, the modern nation state in its internal dimension does hedge violence precisely by enforcing its monopoly, by overpowering, not only just law-breakers but all too frequently, **dissidents and opponents as well**. The monopoly on violence therefore implies, in direct and apparent as well as in more latent and structural ways, a systematic application of violence, precisely **to safeguard the main conditions of the functioning of public and economic life under prevailing production and property relations.** This monopoly also extends outside the state’s realm in the sense that the sovereigns, by their mutual recognition under the Westphalian system, mutually guarantee to each other comprehensive control of their territories, also to foreclose unwarranted violent action reaching out from one state territory to the other; up to the formal banning of war (safe for self-defense) under the UN Charter, this limited outward violent action also to state controlled, formalised, if catastrophically destructive war. As we shall see below, this situation has since changed fundamentally. Past and current examples for such employment of violence by states include the day-to-day use, mainly of police power to maintain public order; specific efforts to install and maintain an effective border regime which in former times, mainly guarded internal markets against the competition by imported goods that might put to risk domestic industries, while today it is maintained by many states largely to give effective force to the exclusionary logic of citizenship; the **repression of dissent**; the **homogenising impact of state institutions** on societies which may be **backed up by violent means**; wars for various purposes. In particular the internal applications of violence deserve some comment, before we turn to the problem of wars or the regime of violence in international relations. The monopoly on violence forms a basic instrument to ensure the everyday safety of a state’s citizens (or subjects) from random acts of force, as a necessary corollary to stripping them of possession of their own means of violence. A public realm that is in this sense pacified, i.e. devoid of random violence, may also be considered as a necessary pre-condition for a public discourse and debate that involves more than the chosen few. In this sense, the monopoly of violence in its dimension of ensuring public peace and order has been associated with the emergence of a civil society and a public sphere (see e.g. Dunn 2001: 51), i.e., a sphere of basically free deliberation and debate, indispensable for any meaningful involvement of citizens into the affairs of state. All this presupposes a generally accepted or in any case, a prevalent idea of public order. As can be seen from many instances, consensus on such questions is not as self-evident as may be supposed at first sight. At the same time, such consensus is obviously subject to debate in the public realm, which may lead potentially to shifts and redefinitions. Free-flowing public discourse is in this way inherently self-reflexive and self-critical. But all this is fraught with conceptual difficulties as well as with problems in the real world. Suffice it to say that the disarming of citizens has to date not been accomplished yet in a country such as the US, and in this sense a very crucial aspect of the concept of a strictly civilian, basically non-violent public order is subject to major controversy. Again, it has for a long time been characteristic for the upholding of public order in Britain that **police would not be equipped with fire arms**. Furthermore, the public realm or civil society, i.e. the space of ideally uninhibited articulation and organisation of interests and concerns, is **anything but a level playing field**. From a broadly Gramscian perspective in particular, **civil society and public space appear rather as shaped deeply by relations of domination and inequality that are characteristic of modern capitalist society** (cf. Kössler/Melber 1993: 60-82). Therefore, the idea of public order and the concrete ways and means how it is enforced is subject to definition and to public debate, most likely to be defined and redefined by hegemonic processes. Public discourse, then, is decisively impacted, but not exclusively determined by societal power relations, and this applies also to the prevalent idea of public order. These are not arcane concepts and debates. Rather, such processes find their concrete and palpable expression in the treatment of dissidents by police, in the quality of courts of justice, or in the leeway accorded to the media in any society bounded by a nation state. These hints point further to the importance of public scrutiny of state actions, once more incumbent on civil society structures; and further yet, to the issue of ‘civilising’, in an Eliasian sense, the performance of state organs and agents in the execution of the monopoly of violence (see e.g. Hinz 2002: 325-6).